THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A needle apparatus for administering a peripheral nerve block, said needle apparatus comprising:

a hollow needle having a plurality of fenestrations proximate a distal end of said hollow needle, structured to allow location of all of the fenestrations within a fascial compartment during injection, wherein the fenestrations are spaced at intervals within one to two millimeters of each other and are structured to administer a flow of local anesthetic inside a fascial compartment while minimizing flow of anesthetic outside the boundaries of the fascial compartment;

a needle hub having a hollow interior disposed about a proximate end of said hollow needle; and

a stylet cap coupled to a proximate end of a stylet, wherein said stylet is freely slidable inside said hollow needle and needle hub, such that selectively withdrawing the stylet from needle apparatus enables a back flow of fluid into the needle hub from which proper localization of the apparatus may be verified prior to administering the local anesthetic and wherein said stylet cap creates a releasably secure pressure fit with said needle hub upon full insertion of said stylet into said hollow needle.

2. (original) The needle apparatus of claim 1, wherein said fenestrations are longitudinally disposed along alternate sides of said hollow needle.

3. (original) The needle apparatus of claim 2, wherein said needle hub further comprises at least one fenestration indicator disposed about said needle hub, said fenestration indicator capable of providing visual and tactual verification by a user of an orientation of said fenestrations.

4. (original) The needle apparatus of claim 1, wherein said needle hub further comprises a magnifying window disposed within said needle hub, wherein said magnifying window provides a magnified view of said hollow interior of said needle hub.

5. (currently amended) A needle apparatus for administering a peripheral nerve block, said needle apparatus comprising:

a hollow needle having a plurality of fenestrations proximate a distal end of said hollow needle, structured to allow location of all of the fenestrations within a fascial compartment during injection, wherein the fenestrations are spaced at intervals within one to two millimeters of each other and are structured to administer a flow of local anesthetic inside a fascial compartment while minimizing flow of anesthetic outside the boundaries of the fascial compartment, and wherein said distal end of said hollow needle is bounded by an occluded tip;

a needle hub disposed about a proximate end of said hollow needle, said needle hub having at least one fenestration indicator disposed about said needle hub, wherein said fenestration indicator is capable of providing visual and tactual verification by a user of an orientation of said fenestrations; and

a stylet cap disposed about a proximate end of a stylet, said stylet cap capable of forming a releasably secure, axially rotatable pressure fit with said needle hub, wherein said stylet is capable of freely sliding inside said hollow needle and needle hub, and wherein said stylet occludes said fenestrations when fully inserted into said hollow needle.

6. (original) The needle apparatus of claim 5, wherein said needle hub further comprises a magnifying window disposed within said needle hub, wherein said magnifying window provides a magnified view of an interior of said needle hub.

7. (currently amended) A method for anesthetizing an affected peripheral nerve, said affected peripheral nerve being contained within a corresponding fascial compartment, wherein said fascial compartment comprises a fascial membrane, said method comprising:

identifying a dermal area of a patient substantially corresponding to said affected peripheral nerve;

inserting a fenestrated needle into said dermal area, said fenestrated needle comprising a plurality of fenestrations, structured to allow location of all of the fenestrations within the fascial compartment during injection, wherein said plurality of fenestrations are proximate a distal end of said fenestrated needle and are spaced at intervals within one to two millimeters of each other;

advancing said fenestrated needle slowly through said dermal area and said fascial membrane, whereby at least one of said fenestrations is located within said fascial compartment;

withdrawing a stylet disposed within said fenestrated needle to verify proper placement of said fenestrated needle; and

injecting local anesthetic through said fenestrated needle to induce an efflux of local anesthetic into said fascial compartment while minimizing flow of anesthetic outside the boundaries of the fascial compartment and a corresponding anesthetic block at said affected peripheral nerve.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein said fenestrated needle further comprises a needle hub disposed about a proximate end of said fenestrated needle.

9. (original) The method of claim 8, wherein said withdrawing a stylet further comprises observing a backflow of fluid within said needle hub to verify that said fenestrated needle is not located intravascularly.

10. (new) The needle apparatus of claim 1, wherein the fenestrations are spaced within one millimeter of each other.

11. (new) The needle apparatus of claim 5, wherein the fenestrations are spaced within one millimeter of each other.

12. (new) The method of claim 7, wherein the fenestrations are spaced within one millimeter of each other.